

TO: Interested Partners/Stakeholders
FROM: Jim Carden
Deputy Commissioner

RE: Request for Proposal (RFP) for American Recovery and Reinvestment
Act funds (ARRA)

DATE: September 8, 2009

The mission of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) is to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential. The Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS) assists Alabamians with disabilities achieve their independence through employment, whether it be entering or retaining full-time employment, or when appropriate, part-time employment.

VRS' success in employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities depends on their partnerships and collaborations with other providers and community-based programs. As we strive to identify and meet the needs of these populations, we are soliciting proposals for innovative demonstration projects that provide direct services to consumers with the most significant disabilities that result in employment outcomes. Project agreements will be negotiated with those who are determined to be creative programs and services that collaborate to increase service capacities in local communities to meet the service needs of un-served and underserved individuals with the most significant disabilities to become successfully employed. Priority will be given to proposals that address the needs of individuals with most significant disabilities in rural areas and with "hard to serve" individuals with disabilities; which may include but are not limited to those disabilities such as significant intellectual, autism, TBI, mental illness, deaf-blind and spinal cord injuries, etc. Proposals may consider non-traditional work environments including home-based employment. Proposals should include plans for job retention services and sustainability of the project.

ADRS may award a total of 2 million dollars in overall projects to those programs whose proposals demonstrate their capability to address the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities in rural areas and to "hard to serve" individuals with disabilities. The typical award may not exceed \$200,000.00 for each program selected and ADRS may renew project awards for one additional fiscal year to those programs meeting the performance outcomes outlined in the proposal. Exceptions may be made for greater amounts for exceptional requests.

To be eligible for an award, prospective applicants must submit a proposal describing how they intend to increase service capacity for individuals with the most significant disabilities or in areas of the state which historically tend to be un-served or underserved. Your proposal description must include an overview of your organization, a project summary inclusive of populations to be served, categories of disabilities served and

barriers to employment, and an implementation plan. In addition, the project summary should include types of employment targeted for placement, expected wages and benefits of consumers placed, job retention and sustainability of the project. The budget form, enclosed in the proposal packet, must also be completed.

You are invited to submit a proposal, an original + 6 copies in accordance with the provisions outlined in this Request for Proposal. Your proposal must be received by 5:00 p.m. (CDT), October 30, 2009 at the following address:

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services
Deputy Commissioner's Office
602 South Lawrence Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

A bidder's conference is to be held on September 24, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in State Office of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, 560 South Lawrence Street, 1st Floor Conference, Montgomery, Alabama 36104. Attendance is not mandatory, but your participation is encouraged. For questions, contact Deputy Commissioner Jim Carden.

This RFP is for American Recovery and Reinvestment ACT (ARRA) funds (CFDA No. 84.393A) and projects must be in compliance with all applicable requirements for these federal stimulus dollars. The VR ARRA funds can only be used for activities that are permitted under the Rehabilitation Act and current VR federal regulations. The VR ARRA funds constitute a one-time infusion into the state of additional VR funds that affords us the opportunity to expand our efforts to assist those individuals with the most significant disabilities become gainfully employed.

Providers interested in submitting a proposal must do so in accordance to the following requirements. Your proposal should be divided into four (4) sections:

- Overview of your Organization
- Project Summary
- Implementation Plan
- Completed Budget Form

Proposals should be stapled or spring clipped in the upper left corner. Use standard 8.5 x 11 white paper for all proposals. Please limit your proposal to not more than 20 pages. Double space your proposal with 1-inch margins and use 12-point font. You should number all your pages.

The Overview of your Organization should include a concise description of the history of your organization and successful outcomes of the individuals served by you. It should also include the types of disabilities served.

Including the activities listed on page 2 of the RFP, your Project Summary should also include the goals/proposed outcomes and how the success of the project will be

measured. Tell us how the proposed project fulfills an identified need for individuals with the most significant disabilities including data/input that may have been collected. Include types of disabilities that will be served, how your capacity to serve individuals with disabilities will be increased or enhanced, and where the services will be provided. You should project the total number of individuals to be served.

Your Implementation Plan should describe how you intend to carry out your project, identifying major tasks, activities, and responsibilities. Include timelines with milestones/benchmarks as part of your implementation plan.

Budget Form - Complete the Budget Form with information on the costs of your proposed project.

Certification Page - This page must be submitted as the cover page of your proposal and completed in its entirety.